

Editor's note: This month we are beginning a new series recognizing the work of Duxbury's unsung town employees. We hope this series will have the two-fold benefit of recognizing the hard work of those who serve our town, school and public safety departments and also help residents get to know better faces they see around town. If you know a deserving nominee, please drop us a line at editor@duxburyclipper.com

Unsung Duxbury

Name: Barbara Ripley

Position: Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

How long have you worked for the Town: Since May 8, 2000.

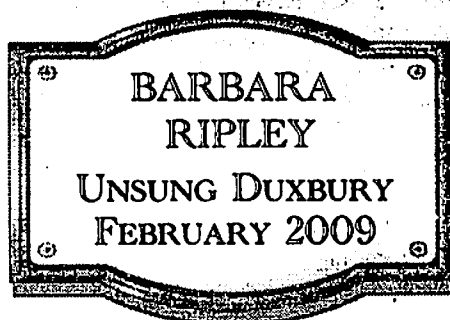
What did you do before working here:

I was a psychiatric social worker at the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic in Pittsburgh. However, I have always had a strong interest in government work, probably because

I grew up in the suburbs of Washington, DC. I took several years off to raise my sons, and ended up moving to Duxbury. Eventually, I became involved in town government through the Ashdod Fire Station re-opening project. My first job in town was as the administrative assistant to the Planning Board. In June 2005, I entered my current position.



touch" the effects of my work. I enjoy going to restaurants where I have helped the proprietors with their liquor licenses. I enjoy seeing our public safety officers doing detail work for the



Town, soon after collaborating with them on a project. I enjoy working with our Conservation Department and then taking a wonderful hike at the North Hill Marsh the next day. The examples are endless. The feeling of community is outstanding. Also,

I cannot fail to mention that my colleagues at Town Hall are fantastic. We have an extremely dedicated staff. They are also very friendly, and have extended many kindnesses to me.

What's the biggest challenge: I am responsible for many aspects of producing the annual Town Meeting. The number of details involved in this process is mind-boggling. There are 51 articles in this year's annual Town Meeting and eight in the special. Each one starts to feel like a child of mine. From Christmas until the final gavel sounds at the end of the March meeting, I have to be on overdrive. Thankfully, the selectmen, moderator and all the town officials are wonderful to work with, and forgive my occasional (okay, maybe not so occasional) impatience! I would like to make special mention of Tony Kelso, who runs the Performing Arts Center, where we hold Town Meeting. I am exhausted by the time we get to the big day. He makes it run like clockwork. Most important, I always feel as though I have the support of my boss, the town manager. He inspires my best efforts. Our department secretary, Anne Murray, is outstanding.

What do you like to do in your free time: I have two sons. Brian, age 22, is a Civil Engineering major at Merrimack College. Steven, age 18, will be a freshman at Northeastern University this fall, and plans to major in Biology. They are wonderful young men, and have taught me a lot. I also like to volunteer when I can. I just finished a two-year stint as the DHS Gridiron Club Secretary. Watching that team go all the way to the Superbowl (and win!) was a big thrill!

Favorite books or movies: My favorite books are biographies. I have recently read biographies of the following people: Colin Powell, Katherine Graham, Ted Turner, Alan Greenspan, Mikhail Gorbachev, Ronald Reagan, and Eleanor Roosevelt. I recently saw "Gran Torino" with Clint Eastwood. Fantastic!